**THEME**: SPIRITUAL LEPROSY CAN BE CURED
**READINGS**: Lev. 13:1-2, 44-46/ 1 Cor. 10:31-11:1/ Mark 1:40-45
6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

Leprosy has to be diagnosed early and measures taken to prevent its spreading in the community (*cf*. first reading).  We may not be lepers, judging by our physical health and appearance, but we may be spiritual lepers.  However, ***there is great news for us: Jesus can cure both physical and spiritual leprosy*** (*cf*. Gospel reading)!

***Sin is spiritual leprosy***.  As physical lepers are quarantined for fear of spreading the infectious disease, so sin (spiritual leprosy) creates a distance between us and God. As leprosy disfigures a person physically, so sin disfigures us in spirit; we become no longer the ‘image and likeness’ of the All-holy God – we become something else. As physical leprosy makes its victims lose their fingers, toes, etc., so sin makes us lose ‘parts’ of our souls. One could say that because of our sins, some of us are ½, ¼, 1/10 of the original souls God created for us.

This notwithstanding, there is good news for us: Jesus Christ wants to restore the wholeness of our fractioned souls.  However, He wants us to play a part in the process of restoration – it is a simple task.  For instance, in the case of the Syrian army officer, Naaman, he was told to wash seven times in the Jordan. He refused initially; however, when he later accepted (with faith) the instruction of the prophet Elisha and washed in the Jordan, the result was amazing! It was more than a full restoration of his adult skin: his skin became ‘like that of a little child’ (2 Kings 5:14-17!  And in the case of the leper in the Gospel reading, Jesus gave this simple instruction: ‘Go and show yourself to the priest’.

Let us also accept (with faith) the instruction of the Lord Jesus, then go and show ourselves to the priest at the confessional. If we do so, the damaged ‘skins’ of our souls will be restored to the original – they will become like the ***innocent souls of children***.  Amen!